



NEWS RELEASE

Department of Human Services
400 Deaderick Street
Nashville, TN 37219-1602

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FURTHER INFORMATION:

Dana Keeton (615) 313-4707

Steve Sparks (615) 313-4760

DHS Names Families First Employers of the Year

A Nashville child care center and a Clarksville training and staffing agency have been recognized by the Tennessee Department of Human Services for outstanding support of the Families First Program.

Manpower Incorporated of Clarksville is the recipient of the 2002 Families First Large Employer of the Year Award. Boys and Girls Day Care of Nashville received the Families First Small Employer of the Year Award. Both were cited for their outstanding partnership with Families First, the state's welfare reform program that emphasizes work, job training and education for able-bodied adults receiving public assistance.

"Tennessee has one of the most successful welfare reform programs in the nation, and this would not have been possible without the tremendous support from employers all across the state," said DHS Commissioner Natasha K. Metcalf. "Since Families First was implemented in 1996, the partnership we've shared with employers has been an integral part of the program. Many businesses have helped us develop job-specific training programs for Families First participants."

Manpower Incorporated works closely with the DHS office in Montgomery County to assist Families First customers in job placement. The agency has assisted more than 140 Families First clients in obtaining employment over the past year. Manpower has demonstrated a genuine desire to work with Families First participants and goes that extra mile in assisting them with the transition from public assistance to self-sufficiency.

Boys and Girls Day Care has hired 10 Families First customers and assisted them on the road to self-sufficiency. The owner, Linda Williams, serves as a mentor, attempts to motivate staff, and encourages them to pursue continuing education opportunities. She assists employees with opening bank accounts, cashing payroll checks, and securing transportation to and from work. In addition to hiring Families First customers, Williams encourages them to pursue other employment and career opportunities.

"We congratulate these employers and recognize them for their partnership and commitment to help Families First participants make successful transitions into the workforce and remain on their jobs," said Commissioner Metcalf.